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Santa Cruz County Pesticide Regulatory Program 2006/2007 Performance Evaluation Report

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Performance Evaluation of Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commissioner Pesticide Use Enforcement Program

This report provides a performance evaluation of Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commissioner's (CAC's) pesticide use enforcement (PUE) program for the fiscal year 2006-2007. The assessment evaluates the performance of goals identified in the CAC's enforcement work plan as well as the program's adherence to Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) standards as described in the Pesticide Use Enforcement Standards Compendium.

I. Summary Report of Core Program Elements

A) Restricted Materials Permitting:

The restricted materials permitting program element was found to meet DPR standards and work plan goals.

B) Compliance Monitoring:

The compliance monitoring program element was found to meet DPR standards and work plan goals.

C) Enforcement Response:

The enforcement response program element was found to meet DPR standards and work plan goals.

Summary Statement:

Santa Cruz CAC's pesticide use program is currently effective

II. Assessment of Core Program Effectiveness and Work Plan Goals

A) Restricted Materials Permitting:

1) Permit Issuance

The Santa Cruz CAC permit issuance procedures and performance were evaluated through observation and interviews of relevant staff and found to conform to DPR standards and expectations. The county biologists that issue permits all possess Pesticide Regulation and Investigation and Environmental Monitoring licenses.

The DPR evaluation determined that permits are:

- Issued only to qualified applicants;
- Signed by authorized persons;
- Issued for time periods allowed by law; and that
- Permit amendments follow approved procedures.

2) Site Evaluation

The Santa Cruz CAC site evaluation procedures were evaluated through observation, record review, and interviews of relevant staff and found to conform to DPR standards and expectations. The CAC issued 430 agricultural permits and 9 nonagricultural permits during the subject year.

The permits:

- Contained the necessary information;
- Identified treatment areas and sensitive areas that could be adversely impacted by the permitted uses; and
- Identified mitigation measures and included conditions that addressed known hazards.

The CAC staff adequately evaluated permits and determined if the use of feasible alternatives was required. The program reviews all NOIs in a timely manner and adequately monitored agricultural and nonagricultural permits utilizing pre-application site evaluations and use monitoring inspections.

B) Compliance Monitoring:

1) Inspections

Santa Cruz County conducted a total of 452 use-monitoring inspections with an emphasis on property operators and pre-site inspections of field fumigations. During the fiscal year, 34 fieldworker safety inspections were conducted. Thirty records inspections were conducted during this fiscal year with an emphasis on growers with employees. A total of 2 structural inspections were conducted. Santa Cruz CAC inspection procedures and performance were evaluated through DPR oversight inspections and record review and found to conform to DPR standards and expectations. Biologists who possess the pesticide regulation and investigation and environmental monitoring licenses conduct inspections. Inspections are performed according to the inspection strategy documented in the CAC's enforcement work plan. Inspections are performed according to DPR policies and procedures and inspection reports are complete and comprehensive. The inspections adequately provide the information necessary to successfully prosecute violations.

Inspections performed by the CAC were found to:

- Adequately address label, law and regulatory requirements;
- Include interviews of employers and employees as appropriate;
- Adequately document violations; and
- Include appropriate follow-up inspections and procedures.

2) Investigations

The Santa Cruz CAC investigation procedures and performance were evaluated through observation, record review, and interviews of relevant staff and found to conform to DPR standards and expectations. The CAC investigates all complaints

and complete their reports in a timely manner. The CAC refers and or notifies DPR and other agencies as required.

Santa Cruz County conducted eleven investigations during the 2006-2007 fiscal year. Investigations were thorough and complete and submitted on approved forms and in the approved format. The investigations document violations and the CAC collects evidence according to DPR standards. The investigations adequately provide the information necessary to successfully prosecute violations.

C) Enforcement Response:

Santa Cruz County took 13 agricultural civil penalties during the 2006-2007 fiscal year. The Santa Cruz CAC enforcement response was evaluated through observation, record review, and interviews of relevant staff and found to conform to DPR standards and expectations. The CAC' enforcement program was found to:

- Initiate the appropriate action when violations are identified;
- Sufficiently support compliance, enforcement and public protection actions;
- Ensure that due process requirements are met when taking an enforcement or permit action or when initiating a private applicator certification or registration refusal/revocation.

The CAC typically levies fines in the appropriate category, adheres to statutory time frames and follows DPR policies when imposing civil penalties on employees.

III. Recommended Corrective Actions

No corrective actions are currently needed.

IV. Non-Core and Desirable Activities

Outreach and Training

The Santa Cruz CAC's office performs bilingual (English/Spanish) training to industry employees on pesticide laws and regulations and worker safety. The CAC also provides outreach materials on compliance with pesticide laws and regulations and worker safety to restricted material permittees.